

Missouri House of Representatives

Carl Bearden

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Re: Docket # 01-348

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 – 12th St., S.W.
Washington, DC 20544

Dear Mr. Powell:

I am writing to encourage you to support the ECHOSTAR/Direct TV merger currently pending before the F.C.C. and the D.O.J. As you may be aware, cable providers control 80% of pay television households in America today. My constituents are consistently upset with the ever-increasing price they have to pay for cable services. The proposed merger will provide true competition and create a competitive price environment.

You may also be aware that cable companies limit themselves to populated areas. Consequently, most rural areas do not have the availability to receive cable. ECHOSTAR and Direct TV provide urban and rural customers with access to not only pay television services but also to Internet services. Unfortunately, as two separate companies their individual abilities to provide effective and more efficient services are limited due to available bandwidth.

The proposed merger will result in better services, more choices, and more competitive pricing, not less. Areas currently not served or under served will be more likely to have the opportunity to receive the services they desire at affordable prices. As a result of the merger, the cable companies will have an economic incentive to provide better services and more programming choices resulting in more competition. I hope you will support the merger.

Sincerely,

Carl L. Bearden

(transcription – original on file; call (816) 561-7555)